DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 199 862 EA 013 363

TITLE	The Officer Friendly Program. Technical Assistance Bulletin 9.
INSTITUTION	National School Resource Network, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
PUB DATE	[79]
GRANT	79JS-AX-0019
NOTE	6p.
AVAILABLE FROM	National School Resource Network, 5530 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20015 (free).
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Education; *Law Enforcement; *Police School Relationship; Program Descriptions; *Program Implementation; *School Security; *Technical Assistance
IDENTIFIERS	Officer Friendly Program

ABSTRACT

The Officer Friendly program, sponsored by the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, is designed to humanize children's perceptions of police officers and their work, improve rapport between children and police, increase awareness of safety and civic responsibility, and reduce crime involving children. The program involves visits by police officers to school classrooms and followup activities conducted by teachers. This bulletin describes the initiation, organization, and implementation of community Officer Friendly programs. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED199862

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
X Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

National School Resource Network
National Center • 5530 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC • (301) 654-2550 • Toll Free (800) 638-8090
Eastern Regional Center • 53 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215 • (617) 353-4554
Southern Regional Center • 58 6th Street, N.E., Atlanta, GA 30308 • (404) 872-0296
Midwestern Regional Center • 6 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1706, Chicago, IL 60602 • (312) 782-5787
Western Regional Center • 18 Professional Center Parkway, San Rafael, CA 94903 • (415) 472-1227

Technical Assistance Bulletin 9

The Officer Friendly Program

Summary

The Officer Friendly program, sponsored by the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, is designed to humanize children's perceptions of police officers and their work, improve rapport between children and police, increase awareness of safety and civic responsibility, and reduce crime involving children. The program involves visits by police officers to school classrooms and followup activities conducted by teachers. This bulletin describes the initiation, organization, and implementation of community Officer Friendly programs.

The Problem

The public image of law enforcement officers--especially as perceived by children--suffers from negative attitudes expressed by parents, siblings, and friends as well as the influence of television police shows. This negative image in turn fosters children's disrespect for law and a failure to take advantage of information about safety and crime prevention which could be provided by police officers. A school-based program designed to improve rapport between police and children and teach them civic responsibility may also ultimately reduce problems of disruptive and unlawful behavior both in schools and in society.

In setting up such a program consultation with the police department and the school system is needed to identify local needs and determine whether cooperative program development is possible.

In implementing the program the police officer must learn to work within the school's organizational and administrative structure, deal with intraschool politics, maintain working relationships with individual school personnel and others affected by the program, and relate to children.

The Solution

The first Officer Friendly program was sponsored by the Sears-Roebuck Foundation in 1966 in cooperation with the Chicago Police Department and Board of Education. The general objectives of the program were and are to humanize children's image of police and improve rapport between them, encourage awareness of traffic and general safety precautions, and help to prevent crime by developing the children's regard for their own welfare and civic responsibility. These objectives may be modified to suit local needs.

The Foundation provides the following general guidelines for initiating and organizing the program: As cooperation and participation of police and school personnel are essential, a consensus must first be reached concerning the program's appropriateness and feasibility, and both police and school representatives must be involved in planning. In Hampton, Virginia, for instance, preliminary meetings were attended by a Foundation representative, the police chief, the superintendent of schools, an assistant superintendent of instruction, the principals of the proposed seven pilot schools, the seven teacher coordinators, the elementary and kindergarten supervisors, and the schools' public relations officer.

When program objectives are set, a pilot program is designed and responsibilities are assigned. Police departments determine the Officer Friendly role and develop resources. The school system helps develop materials, schedules Officer Friendly visits, determines how the program fits into the curriculum, assigns school personnel, and rein-

EA 013 363

Prepared under Grant #79JS-AX-0019 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the NSRN and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

forces the program between visits. The school and the police department jointly coordinate the program, determine budgeting and allocation procedures, arrange logistics, and clarify program needs and expectations.

The Sears-Roebuck Foundation makes available the Officer Friendly Resource Library, consisting of eight books providing detailed suggestions for program operation and curriculum design to be adapted to local situations. The general visit plan outlined by the Foundation covers five topics: community responsibility, traffic safety, safety at home, safety away from home, and police function and image. Possible activities and techniques, such as role playing and the use of various illustrative devices, are also discussed, and sample materials are provided.

The Norfolk, Virginia, Officer Friendly program was designed by a curriculum committee consisting of school system representatives, law enforcement officers, and support service assistants. The three program components are Officer Friendly classroom visits, teacher-initiated followup activities, and the Officer Friendly Crime Resistance Activity Book. Two police officers make three 45-minute visits to kindergarten, first and second grade classes. The first visit familiarizes the students with the police officer, his or her activities, and equipment. The second visit deals with pedestrian, bicycle, bus, home, and neighborhood safety. The third visit emphasizes crime prevention, including reducing the risk of the child becoming a victim of crime. The 52-page activity book, designed for second graders, includes pictures to be colored depicting police at work and traffic and other safety precautions, paper doll cut-outs of police uniforms, and various games and puzzles dealing with other specific topics, as well as followup activities to be conducted by teachers after each visit, such as writing stories describing the students' Officer Friendly experiences, role playing, and discussion of safety hazards. For subsequent evaluation, the book also contains a pre-program and post-program test to measure changes in children's attitudes.

In Hampton, Virginia, a steering committee including school and police representatives formulated program objectives--humanization of the officer, safety, and prevention of crime and drug abuse--and recommended using a classroom kit. Other cities' Officer Friendly programs were studied, and other ideas and assistance were provided by teachers. The kit is designed to be multidisciplinary, incorporating principles of language skills, mathematics, science, social studies, art and music, and health--with Officer Friendly as the theme.

The classroom kit utilizes materials from the Foundation's Officer Friendly kit and is designed to enable the teachers to reinforce the topics covered in each visit through subsequent demonstrations, puzzles, games, pictures, filmstrips and cassettes, puppets, and display cards. The materials are correlated with suggested topics for Officer Friendly visits--humanization of the police officer; home, school, pedestrian, and bicycle safety; crime prevention; and summer safety and neighborhood hazards.

Twelve police officers participated in a three-day training session to acquaint them with the public school program. Two officers were female; two were from a local military installation. Their training included looking through textbooks, role playing, child psychology, and school visits to meet students.

Results

The Officer Friendly program has grown from its initial program in 1966 to fully funded implementation in 233 communities. Many other Officer Friendly programs are funded locally, but must be approved by the Foundation. The Foundation suggests that local programs be evaluated in terms of their operation, coordination, effectiveness, materials, and progress from the perspective of both police and school system personnel. General guidelines are also provided for evaluating Officer Friendly performance.

The Foundation cites many reactions--mostly positive, some negative--of teachers and officers involved in the program. For instance, one officer commented "When we first went into the program and asked kids what police officers did, we heard a lot of answers like shooting people, hitting them on the head, things like that. Now we get different answers. 'They help us. They are for safety.'" A teacher remarked, "This is the best PR program ever started to promote law enforcement." On the other hand, some comments indicated problems that can develop. One Officer Friendly said, "You have some teachers that like police officers, some that hate police offi-

cers, and some that are afraid of police officers." One teacher felt Officer Friendly often did not allow enough time for questions and answers.

In general, however, the Officer Friendly program seems successful and well received. In Norfolk, Virginia, children were asked to draw pictures of police officers before the program began and after its conclusion. Three psychologists from Old Dominion University who evaluated these drawings and utilized other measurement techniques concluded that, after participating in the Officer Friendly program, children were more likely to see police officers as people who help victims of crime. A program coordinator noted, however, that hard evidence of changes in children's attitudes will probably not be seen for several years. The Virginia Municipal League (VWL) presented Norfolk with its achievement award for outstanding service to citizens for the Officer Friendly program, which VML described as cost effective in that it may represent a significant and rather inexpensive contribution to crime prevention.

A group of officials involved in the Officer Friendly program observed it in operation at a school in Hampton, Virginia, and were favorably impressed, especially with Hampton's classroom kit. The Hampton Police Division is also enthusiastic about the program.

Another evaluation, conducted by the University of Chicago for the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, was based on samples of pre- and post-program tests, teachers' and officers' estimates of change in attitudes, and attitudes towards the Officer Friendly program. Results were that the program had more impact on first graders than fifth graders, and some other variations corresponded to race and economic group. Where the Officers Friendly were considered effective, program materials were found to be somewhat deficient. This latter finding led to development of the Officer Friendly Resource Library.

Replication

The Officer Friendly program may be implemented in any public, private, or parochial school in communities where the school system and the police department agree to cooperate. Although most existing programs are for kindergarten through third grade students, with appropriate revamping the program can be applied to higher grade levels. An officer/teacher guide currently being developed by the Foundation may include guidelines for an eighth grade program.

Required Resources

The Sears-Roebuck Foundation Officer Friendly kit, which include various games, puzzles, visual displays, and other materials, is available for limited distribution and costs $50. An officer/teacher guide is expected to be available for national distribution in early 1980. The Officer Friendly Resource Library is available to communities in which the Foundation is considering funding the program. The library includes the following books:

- Handbook for Coordinating the Officer Friendly Program
- Using the Officer Friendly Training Resources, K-3
- Planning Your Visits
- The Idea Book for Planning Your Visits
- Guide for Officer Friendly Selection
- Learning About Children, K-3
- Learning About Schools
- Getting Messages Back and Forth.

In 233 cities, the Foundation finances all materials and training equipment used in the program. Other cities receive permission to use the Officer Friendly name and may draw upon other communities' materials, but they must rely on local funding, receiving no grant money from the Foundation. The Foundation's area vice presidents make budget recommendations based on the number of programs operating and the need for new materials.

Police departments must supply one or more officers to serve as Officer Friendly and represent the department in the organization and operation of the program. School system representatives are primarily responsible for developing the curriculum and materials and scheduling the classroom visits. Personnel, as well as funding, may also be provided by parents, students, and community leaders; local, regional, or

national agencies and institutions; and local businesses and industries.

Depending on the design of a local program, additional resources--for printing and mailing, for example--may also be necessary.

Contact Persons

The Foundation's national and regional representatives for the Officer Friendly program and the states for which they are responsible are--

Robert C. Good
National Program Director
Southern Representative
Sears Tower
Chicago, Illinois 60684
(312) 875-8366

(Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia)

John H. Blalock
Southern Representative
The Sears-Roebuck Founation
675 Ponce de Leon Avenue, N.E.
Annex 95
Atlanta, Georgia 30395
(404) 885-3707

(Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia)

Robert J. Buzbee
Eastern Representative
The Sears-Roebuck Foundation
555 East Lancaster Avenue
St. Davids, Pennsylvania 19087
(215) 967-3223

(Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia)

Richard K. Hartung
Midwestern Representative
The Sears-Roebuck Foundation
7447 Skokie Boulevard
Skokie, Illinois 60077
(312) 967-3223

(Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin)

Philo K. Holland, Jr.
Pacific Coast Representative
The Sears-Roebuck Foundation
1000 La Playa Drive
Hayward, California 94345
(415) 783-6000, ext. 304

(Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington)

Caly F. Devitt
Southwestern Representative
The Sears-Roebuck Foundation
1000 Belleview
Dallas, Texas 75295
(214) 565-4691

(Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oaklahoma, Texas, Wyoming)

References

Eberhardt, N.K.; Derlega, V.J.; and Heinen, J.R.K. "Norfolk's Officer Friendly." Virginia Police Journal, 13, no. 2 (1978): 2729.

Minetti, P.G., and Coleman, J.H. "Officer Friendly Comes to Hampton, Virginia." The Police Chief, XLV, no. 9 (September 1978): 56.

Officer Friendly. Tide Lines, Hampton City School System (Spring 1978): 20-24.

Officer Friendly Classroom Kit Guide. Hampton (Va.) City School System; Hampton (Va.) Police Division; and The Sears-Roebuck Foundation.

Officer Friendly Crime Resistance Activity Book. Norfolk (Va.) Public Schools.

1978 Annual Report. The Sears-Roebuck Foundation, Chicago, Ill.

University of Chicago, Industrial Relations Center. The Elementary School Child's Perception of Police and the Police Function: An Evaluation of the Officer Friendly Program, 1972.

"VML Achievement Awards." Virginia Town and City, Virginia Municipal League, 13, no. 9 (September 1978): 18-19.

For further information on this program, or to request direct technical assistance in implementing a similar program, contact the National Center or the Regional Center nearest you. NSRN technical assistance is available at no cost to requestors.